

VISION IOWA UPDATE

The Vision Iowa program got into full swing in December as leaders met with potential applicants and the first requests for funding were officially submitted.

Susan Judkins, Vision Iowa Program Coordinator, facilitated a training session for potential applicants in mid-December. The training, which was broadcast on 25 ICN sites around the state, allowed potential applicants the opportunity to ask questions of the staff

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More than 100 people gathered on ICN sites around the state to take part in a Vision Iowa training session on December 14. The session gave potential Vision Iowa and Community Attraction and Tourism program applicants background about what the review committee will consider in making award decisions. The minutes from the training as well as a training PowerPoint presentation are available at www.visioniowa.org.

DIVISION OF TOURISM RELEASES 2001 PUBLICATIONS

The Iowa Division of Tourism has released the 2001 edition of the *Iowa Travel Guide*. The 192-page publication is produced annually and provides a comprehensive listing of Iowa's tourism attractions and lodging facilities. Special features of the publication include campground and golf course information,

Iowa facts, and coupons for discounted travel in the state.



The *Iowa Travel Guide*, which was recognized as the best publication of its kind in the nation in 2000, is an essential trip planning tool for the 500,000 people

who pick up or request copies each year, according to Nancy Landess, Administrator of the Tourism Division.

The Travel Guide's partner publication, the *Iowa Calendar of Events*, rolls off the press this month. The 2001 installment is the largest ever, containing more than 2,000 events that take place throughout the year. In July, the publication's second edition will be available and will include only events that take place during the last six months of 2001. If you have an event that is not included in the first edition but you would like it included in the second edition, please submit it by visiting the Events Calendar page at www.traveliowa.com. Remember, each event listed in the printed calendar of events is also included on the Web site and vice versa.

The Travel Guide and Calendar of Events are available free of charge by calling 800-345-IOWA, by logging on to www.traveliowa.com, or by visiting any Iowa Welcome Center. ■

LEGISLATIVE DAY JOINS LAWMAKERS, TOURISM PROS

Less than one month after the 2001 legislative session begins, members of the Iowa tourism industry will have a unique opportunity to meet with the state's lawmakers. Slated for February 7, the annual Travel Federation of Iowa-sponsored Legislative Day includes a legislative briefing at 9:00 a.m. at the Embassy Suites in Des Moines. At the event, Iowa's legislative leaders will brief attendees on the Legislature's goals for this session. After the briefing and throughout the day, the Iowa Gaming Association will run a shuttle bus between the Embassy Suites and the state capitol, giving tourism professionals a chance to head to the statehouse to meet one-on-one with their legislators.



That evening, more than 60 exhibitors will make their way to the Tourism Building on the Iowa State Fairgrounds for a legislative showcase. Last year more than 60 percent of the state's lawmakers, as well as Governor and Mrs. Vilsack, attended the event.

While the legislative showcase is open only to exhibitors who are pre-registered and paid, the legislative briefing is open to anyone who would like to learn more about the 2001 legislative session and its potential impact on tourism in Iowa. To learn more about the day's events, contact TFI member Tom Smull at 515-280-7234 or tsmull@innews.com. ■

NEW WEB SITE GIVES A BOOST TO IOWA

An initiative launched recently by the National Council of State Tourism Directors (NCSTD) makes the hunt for tourism information much easier. A new Web site — www.tourstates.com — provides travelers with seamless access to official destination planning information for virtually every corner of the United States. It allows travelers anywhere in the world to get connected immediately to any state and to acquire information about events, attractions and accommodations throughout the nation. Iowa Division of Tourism Administrator Nancy Landess is a member of NCSTD's board of directors. The organization is an industry council of the Travel Industry Association of America. ■

IOWA TOURISM UNITY DAY SLATED FOR APRIL

Although winter only recently arrived, a popular spring event is just around the corner. Iowa Tourism Unity Day annually ushers in Iowa Tourism Month and will take place April 27 at the Hy-Vee Conference Center in West Des Moines. The event will feature an invigorating keynote message from Eileen McDargh, a legislative update, an announcement of the 2002 cooperative advertising program,

and the presentation of Tourism Leadership Awards; the award nomination form is enclosed. Additional details about the event will arrive by mail later this month. Registration information is also available now in the Travel Industry section at www.traveliowa.com. The fee to attend the event is only \$30 per person. After April 16, the cost increases to \$40 per person. ■



CENSTATES TTRA CHOOSES DES MOINES

After a competitive bid process, the CenStates Travel and Tourism Research Association (TTRA) has selected Des Moines as the site of its fall meeting in September 2002. The association, which is made up of tourism research professionals from 14 Midwestern states, is dedicated to providing education on travel and tourism research. Iowa Division of Tourism Marketing Manager LuAnn Reinders is a member of the CenStates TTRA board of directors and chairs the awards committee. ■

VACATION SHOW SEASON KICKS OFF THIS MONTH

Thanks to the help of several dedicated people, Iowa will have a strong presence at sports and vacation shows around the country this winter and early spring. Paul Holliday, who recently retired from the Greater Des Moines Convention and Visitors Bureau, will staff the Iowa Division of Tourism's exhibit booth at shows in Minneapolis and Kansas City. Vacation Outfitters will represent the state at nine other shows around the country. Volunteers from the Western Iowa Tourism Region will have an exhibit at a show in Omaha. And members from all three tourism regions will pitch in to ensure the success of the Des Moines show. The 2001 sports and vacation show season winds down in late March. ■

TEAM IOWA LEADERS PROVIDE ASSISTANCE

Recently two TEAM (Tourism Enhancement And Marketing) Iowa Leaders provided community outreach assistance. Sandra Leininger from Adams County Economic Development/Historic Preservation participated in a simulated traveler visit in Harrison County as part of the organization's completion of the Tourism Component of the Community Economic Preparedness Program. In November, Kathy Bearce, of the Jones County Tourism Association, assisted with a simulated traveler visit in Burlington.

TEAM Iowa Leaders are tourism professionals and volunteers trained in various areas of tourism development who assist the Division of Tourism and the three tourism regions with various community outreach projects. ■

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and the Vision Iowa Board members about the applications and review process for the Vision Iowa and Community Attraction & Tourism programs. Minutes from that meeting and the PowerPoint presentation that was presented at it are available at www.visioniowa.org.

On December 15, Governor Tom Vilsack, Lt. Governor Sally Pederson, Senator Mary Kramer, and Speaker of the House Brent Siegrist joined the Vision Iowa Board at their monthly meeting. At the meeting, the group finalized plans for the upcoming review of applications for funding under both programs. Because the Legislative Rules Review Committee

voted to approve the rules at their meeting on December 12, the rules became final on December 20 and the first applications for funding were eligible to be submitted on that date.

Minutes from the board meeting are also available at www.visioniowa.org. The site also contains the final version of the programs' applications.

The Vision Iowa Board's next meetings are January 10, February 13 and March 6. Each meeting is held in Des Moines and is open to the public. To learn more about Vision Iowa, contact Susan at susan.judkins@ided.state.ia.us or 515-242-4870. ■

IOWA MERCHANDISE AVAILABLE FOR GIFT SHOPS

The holidays are over, but the heavy spring shopping season is fast approaching. Gift shop owners and managers who are interested in selling Iowa merchandise should contact sales representative Eric Brown from the Vernon Company now for a wholesale price sheet.



Placing bulk merchandise orders early will ensure that the products will arrive in time for the busy spring season. Eric is available at 515-962-1683.

Anyone who would like to purchase smaller amounts of Iowa products can visit www.traveliowa.com or call 888-472-6035 to request a free merchandise catalog. ■



SKI BUFFS HEAD TO WEB SITE IN JANUARY

On the heels of a recent successful campaign promoting Iowa's holiday events, the Iowa Division of Tourism is preparing to promote yet another aspect of the state's travel industry on-line. Beginning January 8, www.traveliowa.com will feature detailed information about each of the state's downhill ski areas. The information is located at the "Ski Iowa" button on the site's home page. ■

IOWA
DEPARTMENT OF
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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